



①9 **BUNDESREPUBLIK
DEUTSCHLAND**



**DEUTSCHES
PATENT- UND
MARKENAMT**

⑫ **Offenl gungsschrift**
⑩ **DE 198 54 003 A 1**

⑳ Aktenzeichen: 198 54 003.5
㉔ Anmeldetag: 18. 11. 1998
㉕ Offenlegungstag: 25. 5. 2000

㉙ Int. Cl.7:
G 01 N 35/00
B 01 L 3/02
G 01 N 35/10
G 01 N 1/10
B 01 L 9/00
B 01 L 3/00
G 01 N 1/28
G 01 F 11/04
// G 01 N 33/53

DE 198 54 003 A 1

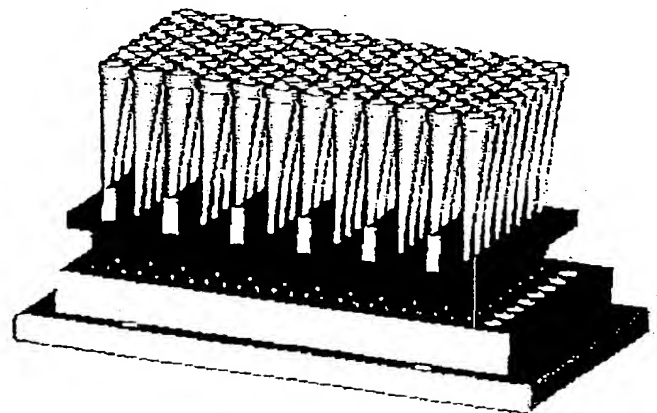
㉙ Anmelder:
JENOPTIK AG, 07743 Jena, DE

㉙ Erfinder:
Moore, Thomas, 07751 Drackendorf, DE;
Zimmermann, Peter, 07747 Jena, DE

Die folgenden Angaben sind den vom Anmelder eingereichten Unterlagen entnommen

㉙ Simultanes Magnetpartikelhandling in zweidimensionaler Anordnung

㉙ Die Erfindung betrifft eine zweidimensionale Anordnung für ein simultanes Magnetpartikelhandling, bestehend aus einer zweidimensionalen Pipettenanordnung, einer zweidimensionalen Magnethalteranordnung und einer zweidimensionalen Kavitätsanordnung in Kombination mit einer Handhabungsmechanik.



DE 198 54 003 A 1

Beschreibung

Umfeld

Seit Ende der 70er Jahre sind Magnetpartikel in der Molekularen Biologie/Biochemie in Gebrauch. Vielfach werden polymerbeschichtete mikroskopisch kleine Sphären, die magnetisches Material in Form von z. B. Eisenoxid enthalten, genutzt, um andere Moleküle an der Oberfläche zu binden und zu transportieren.

Der Vorteil dieser mikroskopisch kleinen Sphären – "Magnetpartikel, magnetic beads" – besteht in der riesigen Oberfläche von nur wenigen Milligramm Material und der einfachen Herstellung von homogenen Partikelsuspensionen, die mit normalen Liquidhandlinggeräten pipettiert, dosiert, dispensiert, diluiert und gemischt werden können. Die Zahl der Anwendungen kann hier nicht vollständig beschrieben werden, sehr weit verbreitet sind u. a.:

- Purifikation von RNA/DNA-Produkten
- mRNA-Isolation
- DNA/RNA Hybridisation
- Festphasensequenzierung
- Zellseparationstechnik

aber auch die üblichen ELISA-Verfahren sind alternativ mit Magnetpartikeln durchführbar, da diese sehr gut mit normalen Laborgeräten gewaschen werden können.

Ein sehr wichtiger Schritt ist auch das Einengen von Suspensionsvolumina, was über die Bindung an Magnetpartikel ebenfalls möglich ist.

Stand der Technik

Zur Trennung der festen und flüssigen Phase sind verschiedene Geräte im Gebrauch. So bietet z. B. die Fa. DYNAL für ein Mikrozentrifugenröhrchen der Fa. Eppendorf eine Halterung an, die das Röhrchen mit einer Feder festhält und gegen einen Permanentmagneten drückt, so daß fast alle Magnetpartikel die sich in Suspension befinden zu diesem hinbewegen.

Mit Hilfe einer normalen Handpipette gelingt es sehr einfach die Flüssigkeit abzunehmen, so daß nur noch die Magnetpartikel an der Gefäßwand verbleiben. Wird das Röhrchen aus der Halterung entnommen und wieder mit Flüssigkeit befüllt und durchmischt, so werden die Partikel gewaschen, so daß letztendlich nur noch das gebundene Produkt an den Partikeln verbleibt. Die Trennung von Produkt und Magnetpartikel erfolgt auf gleichem o. g. Wege. Ebenfalls gebräuchlich sind elektrisch steuerbare Magnetfelder (DYNAL-MPC-auto 96) oder motorisch bewegliche Permanentmagnete; AGOWA-Magnetseparator (DE-GM 296 14 623).

Für das Hantieren von Magnetpartikeln im Mikrotitrationsplattenformat insbesondere zur Vorbereitung der PCR in sog. thin-wall-tube-plates können die Magnethalter MPC-96 oder MPC-9600 von DYNAL verwendet werden. Der Magnetpartikelhalter MPC-9600 ist auch im o. g. AGOWA-Magnetseparator enthalten. Ebenfalls im 8 x 12-well-Format arbeitet der zweiteilige Magnetseparator der Fa. PRO-MEGA. Eisenstifte tauchen in die Mikrotitrationsplatte und halten die Magnetpartikel fest, so daß die feste Phase an diesen Stiften fixiert wird. Dies funktioniert solange die Eisenstifte mit einem Permanentmagnet gekoppelt sind. Wird dieser entfernt, so können die Magnetpartikel wieder resuspendiert werden. Für die Durchführung von Screeningexperimenten ist es wichtig im Mikrotitrationsplattenformat einen hohen Durchsatz an Testpunkten pro Zeiteinheit zu erreichen. Wie bei allen Liquidhandlingschritten gelingt dies nur

durch eine entsprechende Automatisierung.

Deshalb sind die im Screening sehr weit verbreiteten Pipettiermaschinen wie z. B. von den Firmen TECAN, BECKMAN, HAMILTON und ROSYS mit Magnetseparatoren von den Firmen AGOWA bzw. DYNAL nachgerüstet worden. Komplette Testabläufe (z. B. mRNA-Isolierung aus der Zellkultur oder virale RNA aus Vollblut für PCR-Nachweis) dauern aber mit diesen Geräten immer noch mehrere Stunden. Charakteristisch für diese Maschinen ist, daß sie die Liquidhandlingschritte mit einer Pipettenspitze oder eindimensional aufgereihten 2 bis 8 Pipettenspitzen durchführen.

Es ist deshalb Aufgabe der Erfindung eine automatisierbare Lösung für höheren Durchsatz an Mikrotitrationsplatten pro Zeiteinheit vorzuschlagen.

Eine solche Durchsatzserhöhung gelingt durch die Kombination der an sich bekannten mikrotitrationsplattenkompatiblen Magnethalteranordnungen und den ebenfalls bekannten Simultandosierern mit 8 x 12-well Spitzen im Mikrotitrationsplattenformat mit einer entsprechend gestalteten Mikrotitrationsplatten- und Magnethalterpräsentiermechanik.

Durch die Anwendung dieser jeweils zweidimensionalen Liquid- und Magnetpartikelhandlungseinrichtungen entsteht unter Hinzunahme von entsprechend gestaltetem Plattenhandling ein völlig neues Werkzeug für Isolation/Purifikation im Minutenmaßstab.

Im folgenden soll die Gerätetechnik hierzu mit beispielsweise genannten Mitteln beschrieben werden:

Simultandosierer (DD-PS 260571)

Diese Geräte ermöglichen die gleichzeitige Aufnahme/Abgabe von Flüssigkeiten in für Mikrotitrationsplatten üblichen zweidimensionalen 8 x 12- oder 16 x 24-well Raster durch Pipettenspitzen, Nadeln oder ähnlichen Einrichtungen.

Magnethalter

Zweidimensionale 8 x 13-Lochanordnung im Mikrotitrationsplattenformat die z. B. die wells von sogenannten thin wall tube plates aufnehmen können und zwischen deren Lochspalten oder Lochzeilen Permanentmagnete so angeordnet sind, daß beim Einsetzen von den o. g. Platten die in den wells der Platten befindlichen Magnetpartikel von diesen Magneten angezogen und an der Wand der wells fixiert werden. Durch eine zusätzliche Spalte oder Zeile auf dieser Lochplatte gelingt es leicht durch Umsetzen der thin wall tube plates die Magnetpartikel jeweils rechts oder links an die wells zu heften. Durch Wechsel der Position können die Partikel in der flüssigen Phase gewaschen werden. Im folgenden Beispiel wird von einer zusätzlichen Spalte ausgegangen.

oder eine zeilen- oder spaltenweise orientierte Kammianordnung von Permanentmagnetstäben deren Abstand eine Positionierung zwischen den Pipettenspitzen des Simultandosierers erlaubt. Damit ist es möglich die Magnetpartikel in der Pipettenspitze zu halten und Flüssigkeit aufzunehmen oder abzugeben.

Thin wall tube plates (TWP)

Spezielle 8 x 12 = 96 well-Mikrotitrationsplatten (auch 192 und 384 well üblich) geringer Wandstärke üblicherweise aus PP oder PC, welche gewöhnlich so dimensioniert sind, daß sie in marktüblichen Thermocyclern benutzt werden, und somit die Gelegenheit bieten, ebenfalls in einer

Lochplatte mit Magneten positioniert zu werden.

Patentansprüche

Mikrotitrationsplatten- und Magnethalterhandhabungsmechanik

Vorrichtung zur relativen Positionierung von Mikrotitrationsplatten (MTP), TWP's und Vorrats- und Waschgefäßen gegenüber einem Magnethalter sowie wiederum des Magnethalters gegenüber einer matrixförmigen zweidimensionalen Pipettenspitzenanordnung, derart daß es möglich ist z. B. TWP's in den Magnethalter wechselweise beginnend mit Spalte 1 oder 2 abzulegen oder einen Magnethalter gegenüber den Pipettenspitzen zu positionieren, daß in einer ersten Variante Mittel vorgesehen sind, die TWP's oder andere Gefäße mit mikrotitrationsplattenartiger Geometrie von einer Transporteinrichtung zu übernehmen und auf dem Magnethalter abzusetzen und diesen gegenüber den Pipettenspitzen so zu positionieren, daß mit einer matrixförmigen Pipettenspitzenanordnung ein Flüssigkeitsaustausch zwischen Spitzen und Kavitäten erfolgen kann.

Oder das in einer zweiten Variante ein Magnetkanal zwischen den Spitzen so angeordnet wird, daß der Magnetkanal wechselweise beginnend in der ersten oder zweiten Spitzenreihe beginnend angeordnet wird und das ein Flüssigkeitsaustausch zwischen Pipettenspitzen und den Kavitäten der Mikrotitrationsplatte möglich ist.

Die Mittel zur Lösung dieser technischen Aufgabe lassen sich wie folgt beschreiben:

Zur Bewegung der Mikrotitrationsplatten und des Magnethalters in vertikaler Richtung ist ein entsprechender motorischer Antrieb z. B. in Form eines Zahnstangenantriebs mit Schrittmotor vorgesehen. Die Positionierung in beiden horizontalen Richtungen erfolgt mit einem elektrisch steuerbaren Kreuztisch. Die Fixierung der Platten unterhalb der Pipettenspitzen kann mit einem Greifmechanismus erfolgen. Der Transport der Platten zum Simultandosierer erfolgt durch einen Wagen z. B. auf einer Stangenführung. Um die Magnethalter zwischen den Pipettenspitzen zu bewegen ist ein horizontal laufender linearer Antrieb vorgesehen der die Magnete aus dem Zwischenraum der Spitzen herauszieht und in einer um ein Raster versetzten Position wieder hineinschiebt. Für alle diese Antriebs- und Handhabungsmittel kann auf den Stand der Technik zurückgegriffen werden. Es ist einfach möglich mit einer Computersteuerung diese verschiedenen Bewegungsabläufe zu automatisieren.

Ein einfacher Ablauf zum Waschen der Partikel ist im folgenden beschrieben:

Die Partikel befinden sich in homogener Suspension in einer TWP und haben an ihrer Oberfläche z. B. Nukleinsäure gebunden. Durch Einsetzen der thin wall plates in den Magnetadapter werden die Partikel an den Wänden der wells fixiert, und es gelingt mit der zweidimensionalen Pipettenanordnung die flüssige Phase abzunehmen und simultan Waschlösungen aus einem Vorratsgefäß, welches u. a. auch eine MTP oder ein ähnliches Gefäß sein kann, zuzugeben. Durch Wechseln der Plattenposition um eine Spalte gegenüber den Magneten bewegen sich die Partikel von einer well-Seite zur anderen und werden gewaschen. Dieser Vorgang kann außerhalb des Magnethalters ergänzt werden, durch das simultane Aufsaugen/Abgeben der Flüssigkeit einschließlich der Partikel mit der zweidimensionalen Pipettenspitzenanordnung.

Die Arbeit mit einer solchen Anordnung führt zu einer deutlichen Erhöhung der Verarbeitungsgeschwindigkeit, so daß es möglich wird die Aufreinigung von Nukleinsäuren, einschließlich von Reagenzzugaben, Lyse, Elution und Hinzufügung des PCR-Mixes innerhalb von wenigen Minuten durchzuführen.

1. Anordnung für Liquid-, Magnetpartikel- und Gefäßhandling **dadurch gekennzeichnet**, daß diese eine zweidimensionale Pipettenanordnung, eine zweidimensionale Magnethalteranordnung und eine zweidimensionale Kavitätenanordnung in Kombination mit einer Handhabungsmechanik aufweist.

2. Anordnung gemäß 1, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die zweidimensionale Pipettenanordnung ein simultan arbeitender Pipettier-/Dosierautomat mit wenigstens 4 Spitzen/Nadeln ist.

3.1 Anordnung gemäß 1, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die zweidimensionale Magnethalteranordnung eine Trägerplatte für eine Vielzahl von matrixartig angeordneten Permanentmagneten ist.

3.2 Anordnung gemäß 1, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die zweidimensionale Magnethalteranordnung eine Trägerplatte für eine Vielzahl von zeilenweise angeordneten Permanentmagnetstäben ist.

3.3 Anordnung gemäß 1, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die zweidimensionale Magnethalteranordnung eine Trägerplatte für eine Vielzahl von spaltenweise angeordneten Permanentmagnetstäben ist.

4. Anordnung gemäß 1, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die zweidimensionale Magnethalteranordnung eine kammartige Anordnung von Permanentmagnetstäben ist.

5. Anordnung gemäß 1, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die zweidimensionale Kavitätenanordnung sich am Mikrotitrationsplattenformat orientiert.

6. Anordnung gemäß 2, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die geometrische Anordnung der Spitzen/Nadeln dem Mikrotitrationsplattenstandart folgt.

7. Anordnung gemäß 3.1, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß sich die Anordnung der Permanentmagnete an den Kavitäten der Mikrotitrationsplatten orientiert.

8. Anordnung gemäß 4, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß sich das Raster der Kammanordnung aus dem Spitzenraster des Simultandosierers ergibt, so daß die Magnetstäbe in die Zwischenräume der Spitzen passen.

Hierzu 2 Seite(n) Zeichnungen

- Leerseite -

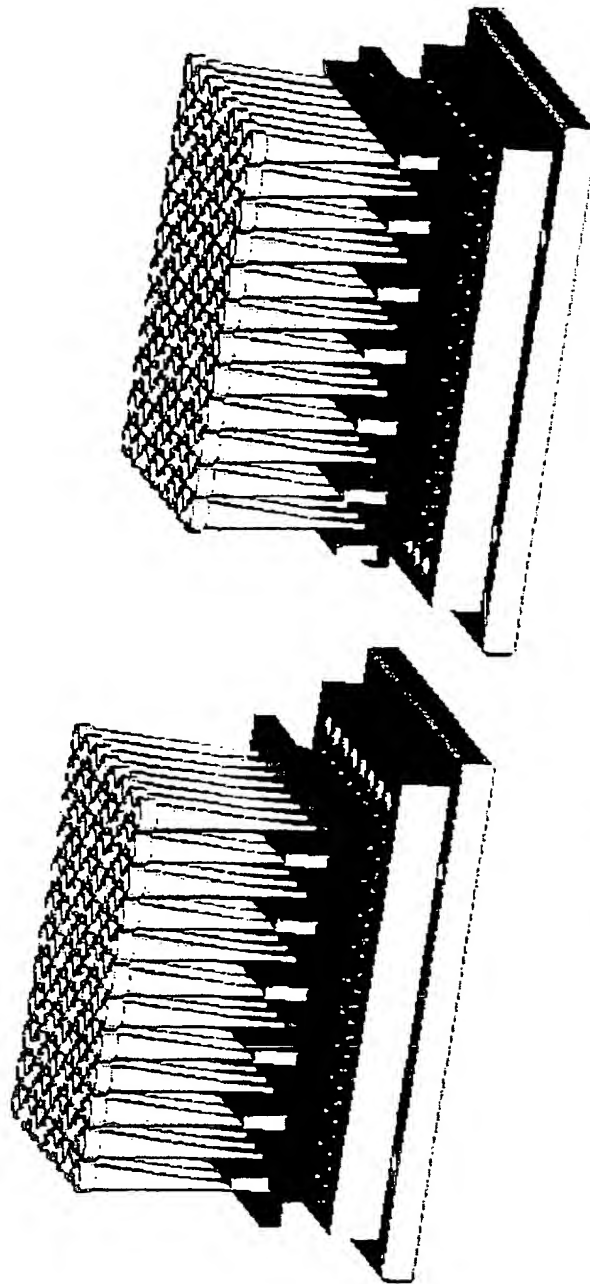


Fig. 1

Fig. 2

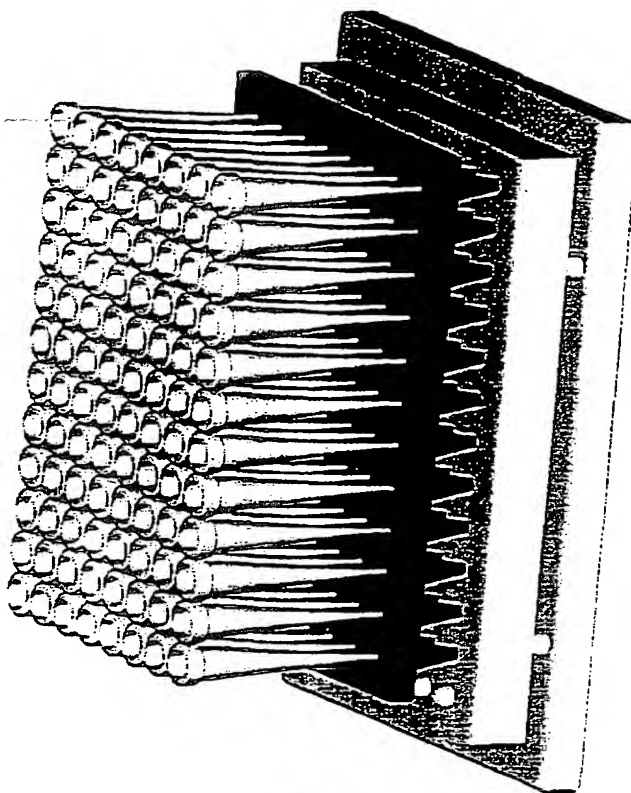


Fig. 4

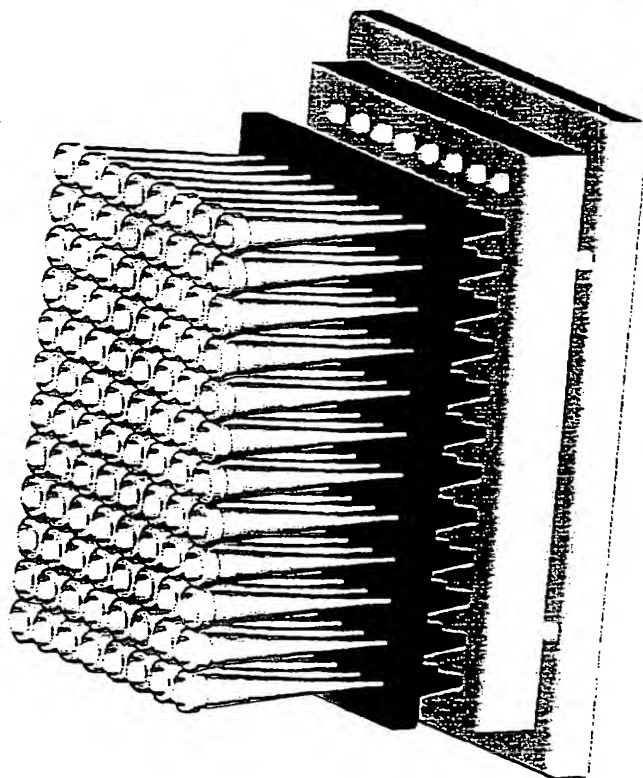


Fig. 3

12 Published unexamined application

10 DE 198 54 003 A1

21 File No.: 198 54 003.5
22 Filing date Nov. 18, 1998
43 Publication date
of unexamined
application May 15, 2000

71 Applicant:
JENOPTIK AG, 07743 Jena, Germany

72 Inventors:
Moore, Thomas, 07751 Drackendorf, Germany
Zimmerman, Peter, 07747 Jena, Germany

The following data are taken from the case papers filed by the Applicant

54 Simultaneous magnetic bead handling in a two-dimensional arrangement.

57 The invention relates to a two-dimensional arrangement for simultaneous magnetic bead handling, consisting of a two-dimensional arrangement of pipettes, a two-dimensional arrangement of magnetic holders and a two-dimensional cavity arrangement in combination with a handling mechanism.



Description

Background

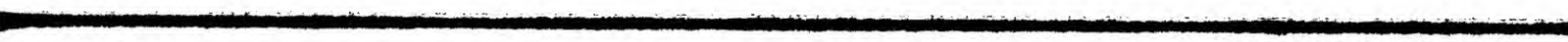
Magnetic beads have been used in molecular biology/biochemistry since the end of the seventies. In many cases, polymer-coated microscopically small spheres which contain magnetic material for instance in the form of iron oxide have been used to bind other molecules at the surface and to transport them.

The advantage of these microscopically small spheres – "magnetic beads" consists in the large surface of only a few milligrams of material and the simple manufacture of homogenous suspensions of beads, which can be pipetted, metered, dispensed, diluted and mixed with normal liquid handling devices. The number of applications cannot be described here exhaustively, the very widely used ones include:

- purification of RNA/DNA products
- mRNA isolation
- DNA/RNA hybridization
- solid phase sequencing
- cell separation technique

but the usual ELISA methods can alternatively also be carried out with magnetic beads, as the latter can be easily washed with normal laboratory equipment.

A very important step is also the concentration of suspension volumes, which is likewise possible via binding to magnetic beads.



The first part of the document is a letter from the President of the United States to the Congress, dated January 1, 1861. It is a very important document, as it is the first official communication of the new President to the new Congress. The letter is written in a very formal and dignified style, and it contains a great deal of information about the state of the Union at that time.

The second part of the document is a letter from the President to the Congress, dated January 1, 1861. It is a very important document, as it is the first official communication of the new President to the new Congress. The letter is written in a very formal and dignified style, and it contains a great deal of information about the state of the Union at that time.

The third part of the document is a letter from the President to the Congress, dated January 1, 1861. It is a very important document, as it is the first official communication of the new President to the new Congress. The letter is written in a very formal and dignified style, and it contains a great deal of information about the state of the Union at that time.

The fourth part of the document is a letter from the President to the Congress, dated January 1, 1861. It is a very important document, as it is the first official communication of the new President to the new Congress. The letter is written in a very formal and dignified style, and it contains a great deal of information about the state of the Union at that time.

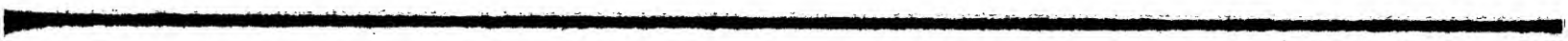
The fifth part of the document is a letter from the President to the Congress, dated January 1, 1861. It is a very important document, as it is the first official communication of the new President to the new Congress. The letter is written in a very formal and dignified style, and it contains a great deal of information about the state of the Union at that time.

Prior art

Different equipment is used to separate the solid phase from the liquid phase. For instance the company DYNAL offers a holding device for a micro-centrifuge tube of the company Eppendorf; said device fixes the tube by a spring and presses it against a permanent magnet with the result that almost all magnetic beads which are in suspension move towards the magnet.

With the use of a normal hand pipette the liquid can be easily removed, to the effect that only the magnetic beads remain on the vessel wall. If the tube is removed from the holder and filled with liquid again and mixed, the particles are washed, with the result that ultimately only the bound product remains on the particles. The product and magnetic particles are separated in the same way as mentioned above. Electrically controllable magnetic fields (DYNAL-MPC auto 96) or motor-driven permanent magnets are also widely used: AGOWA magnetic separator (DE-GM 296 14 623).

For handling magnetic beads in the micro-titration plate format, in particular in preparation of the PCR in so-called thin-wall-tube plates, the magnetic holders MPC-96 or MPC-9600 of DYNAL can be used. The magnet bead holder MPC-9600 is also contained in the above-mentioned AGOWA magnetic separator. The two-piece magnetic separator of the company PROMEGA also works in the 8 x 12 well format. Iron pins dip into the micro-titration plate and fix the magnetic beads, with the result that the solid phase is fixed to these pins. This works as long as the iron pins are coupled to a permanent magnet. If the latter is removed, the magnetic beads can be resuspended. For carrying out screening experiments it is important to achieve a high throughput of test points per time unit in the micro-titration plate format. Just as in the case of all liquid handling steps, this can only be achieved by corresponding automatisisation.



The first of these is the question of the origin of the human race. It is generally admitted that the human race is of African origin, and that it has spread from Africa to all other parts of the world. The second question is the question of the development of the human race. It is generally admitted that the human race has developed from a lower state to a higher state, and that it has done so in a regular and orderly manner. The third question is the question of the influence of the environment on the human race. It is generally admitted that the environment has a great influence on the human race, and that it has done so in a regular and orderly manner. The fourth question is the question of the influence of the human race on the environment. It is generally admitted that the human race has a great influence on the environment, and that it has done so in a regular and orderly manner. The fifth question is the question of the future of the human race. It is generally admitted that the human race has a bright future, and that it will continue to develop and progress in a regular and orderly manner.

Therefore, the pipetting machines widely used in screening, such as those of the companies TECAN, BECKMAN, HAMILTON and ROYS have been equipped later with magnetic separators of the companies AGOWA and DYNAL, respectively. Complete test sequences (for instance mRNA isolation from the cell culture or viral RNA from whole blood for PCR) carried out with these machines still take several hours. It is characteristic of these machines that they perform the liquid handling steps with a pipette tip or 2 to 8 one-dimensionally arranged pipette tips.

Hence, the invention addresses the problem of proposing an automated solution for a higher throughput of micro-titration plates per time unit.

Such an increase in the throughput can be achieved by combining the per se known magnetic holding means, which is compatible with micro-titration plates, with the likewise known simultaneous metering with 8 x 12 well tips in the micro-titration plate format with the use of a correspondingly shaped micro-titration plate mechanism and magnetic holder presentation mechanism.

The use of these liquid and magnetic bead handling devices, each of which is two-dimensional, together with correspondingly designed plate handling results in a completely new tool for isolation/purification in minutes.

In the following, the corresponding equipment technique will be described with means mentioned as examples.

Simultaneous meters (DD-PS 260571)

These devices allow liquids to be simultaneously received/dispensed by pipette tips, needles or similar devices in the two-dimensional 8 x 12 or 16 x 24 well grid usual for micro-titration plates.

Magnetic holder

A two-dimensional 8 x 13 hole arrangement in the micro-titration plate format which can for instance receive the wells of so-called thin wall tube plates, with permanent magnets being arranged between its hole columns or hole lines in such a way that when the afore-mentioned plates are inserted, the magnetic beads present in the wells of the plates are attracted by said magnets and fixed to the walls of the wells. An additional column or line on this hole plate allows the magnetic beads to be easily attached at the wells both on the right-hand or left-hand side by changing the position of the thin wall tube plates. A change in position allows the particles to be washed in the liquid phase. The following example assumes an additional column,

or

a comb-shaped arrangement of permanent magnetic rods, the spacing of which allows it to be positioned between the pipette tips of the simultaneous meter, the arrangement being oriented in lines or columns. In this manner, it is possible to keep the magnetic beads in the pipette tip and to receive or dispense liquid.

Thin wall tube plates (TWP)

Special 8 x 12 = 96 well micro-titration plates (192 and 384 wells are also usual) of small wall thickness usually from PP or PC which are normally so dimensioned that they are used in commercial thermocyclers, and thus offer the possibility of also being positioned in a hole plate with magnets.

Micro-titration plate mechanism and magnetic holder handling mechanism

An apparatus for relatively positioning micro-titration plates (MTP), TWPs and storage and washing vessels vis-à-vis a magnetic holder and the magnetic holder vis-à-vis a matrix-shaped two-dimensional pipette tip arrangement in such a way that it possible to place for instance TWPs into the magnetic holder alternately starting with column 1 or 2 or to position a magnetic holder vis-à-vis the pipette tips, that in a first alternative there are provided means which receive TWPs or other vessels having a micro-titration plate-like geometry from a transportation

means and place it onto the magnetic holder and to so position it vis-à-vis the pipette tips that a liquid exchange between the tips and cavities can be carried out with a matrix-shaped pipette tip arrangement.

Or in a second alternative, a magnetic comb is so arranged between the tips that the magnetic comb is arranged alternately starting in the first or second row of tips and that an exchange of the liquid between the pipette tips and the cavities of the micro-titration plate is possible.

The means for solving this technical problem can be described as follows:

A motor drive, for instance in the form of a toothed rack drive with a stepping motor is provided for moving the micro-titration plates and the magnetic holder in a vertical direction. Positioning in both horizontal directions is performed using an electrically controllable cross table. The plates can be fixed below the pipette tips with a gripper mechanism. The plates are moved to the simultaneous meter by a carriage for instance on a bar guide. In order to move the magnetic holder between the pipette tips there is provided a horizontally extending linear drive which withdraws the magnets from the gap between the tips and reinserts them in a position offset by one grid. For all these drive and handling means the prior art can be resorted to. These different sequences of motion can be easily automated by computer control.

A simple sequence for washing the particles is described hereinafter:

The particles are in a homogenous suspension in a TWP and have for instance nucleic acid bound to their surfaces. By insertion of the thin wall plates into the magnetic adapter the particles are fixed at the walls of the wells and the liquid phase is successfully removed with the two-dimensional pipette arrangement and washing solutions are successfully added simultaneously from a storage vessel which inter alia can also be an MTP or a similar vessel. By changing the plate position by one column relative to the magnets, the particles move from one well

[illegible]

side to the other and are washed. This process can be supplemented outside the magnetic holder by simultaneously sucking up/dispensing the liquid, including the beads, by means of the two-dimensional pipette tip arrangement.

The use of such an arrangement leads to a marked increase in the processing speed, allowing the purification of nucleic acids, including the addition of reagents, lysis, elution and addition of the PCR mix, to be carried out in a few minutes.

Patent claims

1. An arrangement for liquid handling, magnetic bead handling and vessel handling, **characterized in that** it comprises a two-dimensional pipette arrangement, a two-dimensional magnetic holder arrangement and a two-dimensional cavity arrangement in combination with a handling mechanism.
2. The arrangement according to 1, characterized in that the two-dimensional pipette arrangement is a simultaneously working pipetting/metering automatic machine comprising at least four tips/needles.
- 3.1 The arrangement according to 1, characterized in that the two-dimensional magnetic holder arrangement is a carrier plate for a plurality of permanent magnets arranged in the form of a matrix.
- 3.2 The arrangement according to 1, characterized in that the two-dimensional magnetic holder arrangement is a carrier plate for a plurality of permanent magnetic rods arranged in lines.
- 3.3 The arrangement according to 1, characterized in that the two-dimensional magnetic holder arrangement is a carrier plate for a plurality of permanent magnetic rods arranged in columns.

4. The arrangement according to 1, characterized in that the two-dimensional magnetic holder arrangement is a comb-like arrangement of permanent magnetic rods.
5. The arrangement according to 1, characterized in that the two-dimensional cavity arrangement is guided by the micro-titration plate format.
6. The arrangement according to 2, characterized in that the geometric arrangement of the tips/needles is in line with the micro-titration plate standard.
7. The arrangement according to 3.1, characterized in that the arrangement of the permanent magnets is guided by the cavities of the micro-titration plates.
8. The arrangement according to 4, characterized in that the grid of the comb arrangement follows from the tip grid of the simultaneous meter with the result that the magnetic rods fit into the gaps between the tips.

• Utility Model

DE 296 14 623 U1

21 File No.	296 14 623.4
22 Filing Date:	August 23, 1996
47 Registration Date:	December 19, 1996
43 Publication in the Patent Bulletin	February 6, 1997

73 Owner

AGOWA Gesellschaft für molekularbiologische
Technologie mbH, 12489 Berlin, DE

54 A magnetic separator for separating and washing paramagnetic particles and
for eluting substances which have been bound to the paramagnetic particles

100

100

100

100

A magnetic separator for separating and washing paramagnetic particles and for eluting substances which have been bound to the paramagnetic particles

Paramagnetic particles are increasingly used in the most different fields of biology in methods for separating molecules from solutions. They are inter alia offered by Dynal, Amersham, Merck and AGOWA. On account of their paramagnetic properties they are in particular suitable for automatisation. For this purpose, companies, such as Amersham, Techno or Polygen have developed specific magnetic separators. They can be used in robot stations. In these separators, the magnetic field for separating the paramagnetic particles is generated via electromagnets (solenoids) and requires expensive technical equipment. Washing of the paramagnetic particles and elution of the substance bound to the paramagnetic particles are carried out as a separate step via mixing by means of a pipette or a shaker.

The company Dynal developed plates with permanent magnets (Dynal MPC-96, Dynal MPC-9600) for manually separating and washing paramagnetic particles and for eluting substances which have been bound to the paramagnetic particles. For separation, one magnet each is manually placed at one side each of one vessel each containing paramagnetic particles. Washing of the paramagnetic particles and elution of the substance that has been bound to the paramagnetic particles are carried out by manually removing the corresponding magnet from the vessel wall and manually moving another magnet to another site of the same vessel, preferably to the opposite side with the result that the paramagnetic particles are lead through the washing solution or elution solution. An essential drawback of the apparatus developed by Dynal is that it can only be used manually and thus does not lend itself to automatisation.

The invention pursues the purpose of automating the known separation, washing and elution processes of paramagnetic particles by means of movable permanent magnets.

0

The first part of the paper is devoted to a general discussion of the problem of the existence of solutions of the system of equations (1) for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β . It is shown that the system (1) has solutions for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β if and only if the condition (2) is satisfied.

In the second part of the paper the problem of the existence of solutions of the system (1) for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β is solved. It is shown that the system (1) has solutions for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β if and only if the condition (2) is satisfied.

In the third part of the paper the problem of the existence of solutions of the system (1) for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β is solved. It is shown that the system (1) has solutions for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β if and only if the condition (2) is satisfied.

In the fourth part of the paper the problem of the existence of solutions of the system (1) for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β is solved. It is shown that the system (1) has solutions for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β if and only if the condition (2) is satisfied.

In the fifth part of the paper the problem of the existence of solutions of the system (1) for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β is solved. It is shown that the system (1) has solutions for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β if and only if the condition (2) is satisfied.

In the sixth part of the paper the problem of the existence of solutions of the system (1) for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β is solved. It is shown that the system (1) has solutions for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β if and only if the condition (2) is satisfied.

In the seventh part of the paper the problem of the existence of solutions of the system (1) for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β is solved. It is shown that the system (1) has solutions for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β if and only if the condition (2) is satisfied.

In the eighth part of the paper the problem of the existence of solutions of the system (1) for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β is solved. It is shown that the system (1) has solutions for arbitrary values of the parameters α and β if and only if the condition (2) is satisfied.

According to the invention, a permanent magnet is equipped with firm guide elements and provided with a gear, a driving means and a control means, with the result that it can be moved. The permanent magnet is so arranged next to a reaction vessel that its position relative to the reaction vessel can be changed by its horizontal and vertical movements.

According to another embodiment of the invention, the permanent magnet is firmly installed and the reaction vessel is moved in the above-described manner.

According to the invention, it is also possible to move both the permanent magnet and the reaction vessel with the aid of the above-described means, each element being moved only vertically or horizontally.

According to the invention, the movement of the reaction vessel or the permanent magnet can also be brought about by rotation.

Preferably, a permanent magnetic system (for instance a plate with a permanent magnet developed by Dynal) is used in place of a permanent magnet, and a reaction vessel system such as micro-titer plates (for instance from the Gene Amp® PCR system 9600 of Perkin Elmer) is used in place of a reaction vessel.

The impulses for the automatic movement of the permanent magnet and/or the reaction vessel come from control electronics and are transferred to the permanent magnet and/or the reaction vessel via a drive and a gear.

The invention is to be explained in more detail on the basis of a Figure. The Figure shows an embodiment of the apparatus of the invention without this being intended to restrict the invention.

A magnetic separator depicted in the Figure uses permanent magnets for separating and washing paramagnetic particles and for eluting substances which

Journal of Management Education 36(7) 809–826

have been bound to the paramagnetic particles. According to the invention, a plate comprising permanent magnets spaced apart and arranged in parallel is mounted in the vertical and horizontal guides, said plate being connected to a motor and the control electronics via a gear. Thus, it can be moved horizontally or vertically.

The distances between the permanent magnets arranged in parallel to each other are so chosen that the magnets touch the reaction vessel in each case. After termination of the separation process of the paramagnetic particles, optically visible by the accumulation of the particles at the side of the reaction vessel, where the magnet is positioned, the plate with the magnets is automatically vertically lowered and subsequently moved in the horizontal direction to such an extent that, compared to the starting position, the permanent magnets touch the opposite side of the reaction vessel, after the plate with the permanent magnets has been lifted again. Thus, if the reaction solution was previously sucked off and replaced with a washing or elution solution, the paramagnetic particles are moved through the washing solution or elution solution. This process can be repeated as many times as desired.

Claims

1. A magnetic separator for separating and washing paramagnetic particles and for eluting substances which have been bound to the paramagnetic particles, consisting of a permanent magnet and a reaction vessel, characterized in that the permanent magnet and/or the reaction vessel is equipped with per se known means for movement and said means are provided with a control prompted by an electronic signal.
2. The magnetic separator according to claim 1, characterized in that the permanent magnet is a permanent magnet system such as a plate with permanent magnets and the reaction vessel is a reaction vessel system, such as a micro titer plate.
3. The magnetic separator according to claims 1 and 2, characterized in that the control element is a computer.
4. The magnetic separator according to claims 1 to 3, characterized in that the direction of movement of the permanent magnets and/or the reaction vessel is a horizontal and/or a vertical one.
5. The magnetic separator according to claims 1 to 4, characterized in that the movement of the permanent magnet and/or reaction vessel can also be brought about by rotation.

List of numerals

1. locking slider
2. LEDs
3. planar view
4. magnetic plate
5. horizontal guide
6. vertical guide
7. ball bearing
8. gear
9. motor
10. control electronics
11. side view (X-ray representation)

